

AN 1608/4-31.
A R G U M E N T

P R O V I N G,

That *according to the Covenant of Eternal Life revealed in the Scriptures*, Man may be translated from hence into that Eternal Life, without passing through Death, altho the Human Nature of CHRIST himself could not be thus translated till he had passed through Death.

—*Nec vanis credite verbis;
Aspicite en! faciatque fidem Conspectus.*

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The P R E F A C E.

TO them that knew not the reason, it look'd like a Whym for the Man in the Gospel to walk about the Streets with his Bed upon his Back on the Sabbath-day, while the rest of the People were at their Devotion.

And perhaps it may seem more odd in me to bolt out an Argument in Divinity (as a Bone of Contention) into the World, at a time when the rest of Mankind are so deeply engag'd in Secular Affairs.

But he that regardeth the Wind will never sow; and he that waiteth for Times and Seasons will never do Business.

And as that seeming whimsical Man said to them that reproved him, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy Bed and walk:

So say I to them that affront me, He that revealed this unto me, the same bid me tell it abroad, as a watch-word to be given out from one to another (every Man to his Fellow) as fast as he receives it: Let him that heareth say, Come!

And having thus delivered my part of the Message, I look upon my self to have no more to do with it afterwards than you have.

But hereby I shall know whether this Doctrine be mine or no.

If it be mine, it will sink, and fall, and die : But if it be his that I think 'tis, it will kindle it self like a Firebrand from one to another, till it hath set the World in Arms against Death.

And having thus left the decision of the Truth of it to the Success, I begin to feel my self more easy under it.

And as the four Leprous Men said to one another in the Gate of Samaria ; If we sit here, we are sure to die with Famine, and if we go into the Camp of the Syrians, we can but die by the Sword :

So I have said to my self ; If I submit to Death, I am sure to die ; and if I oppose it, I can but be kill'd and die.

And should I be baffled in this Essay, I can lose nothing by it, but that little Credit with the World which I value not, in comparison of this Attempt.

And as those four desperate Men venturing themselves upon this Resolution, did thereupon find that they had been before more afraid than hurt.

So in making this Sally against Death, methinks I have discover'd it to be rather a Bugbear than an Enemy.

And therefore as they having fill'd themselves with Plunder, thought it their Duty to go and tell the News to them that were ready to perish :

So I can't satisfy my self to eat my Morsel alone, without communicating to them, who I know (with my self) must, by reason of Death, be all their life-time subject to Bondage.

And as their glad Tidings of Plenty was never the less welcome to the King and People of Israel, for being brought to them by Men poor and miserable :



So if my News be true in it self, why should it fare the worse for being told by the greatest of Sinners ?

And perhaps this qualifies me to be the Messenger, lest one more holy shou'd seem to be honoured with it for his own personal Sanctity.

I remember a sudden Retort once given me by a Lady (to whom I excused this my Emulation by the Example of Enoch) But you are not so good as he was ; for Enoch walked with God.

And this might have puzzled me, had not Paul (in his List of Worthys) counted upon the Translation of Enoch, as done by Faith : By Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see Death.

Why then if I have as good a Faith for this purpose as he had, I am in this Point (quoad hoc) as good a Man as he was, tho I fall short of him in all his other Qualities.

Nor is it to be expected that any Assembly of Divines should be employed in such a Business as this.

They inclose themselves within the Pale of their own Church, and whoever breaks through that Fence, is prosecuted as a Trespasser upon their Jurisdiction.

And thus the Jewish Priests excommunicated a Layman for teaching them Religion, Thou wast altogether born in Sin, and dost thou teach us ? and they cast him out.

But he that had opened his Eyes, took him in.

And such an exchange I should reckon no great misfortune.

But is it not a shame, That this Enoch, in the beginning of Time, so long before the Receipt of the Promise, should attain to that Faith in Christ which we, that have seen him crucified before our Eyes, think a Sin to offer at ?

But having been tempted to commit this Sin (like a true Mother Child of my grand Parent Eve) I would tempt my Friends to do so too.

And all I ask of them is this;

Having abstracted the Study of seven Years Recluse into less than two Hours reading, I only desire the perusal of it at a time of Leisure, when Men and Women design to be serious, and think most of themselves.

And then I flatter my self that they will find it not the most unpleasant Hour that ever they spent in their Life.

For this I know, that nothing is more pleasant to us than News; and what I have said, was never said by Man before.

And this I know, that (notwithstanding the defection of our Natures) nothing is more pleasant to Man than Truth. And what I have said is true:

And a Truth that all the Gainfayers shall not be able to resist.

Tho it be in contradiction to the most received Truth in the World, That all Men must die.

An ARGUMENT proving, That according to the Covenant of Eternal Life revealed in the Scriptures, Man may be translated from hence into that Eternal Life, &c.

A NTE obitum felix nemo, supremaque fata, is a Fiction of Poets.

And that old Motto (worn upon Tomb-stones) *Death is the Gate of Life*, is a Lye : By which Men decoy one another into Death, taking it to be a Thorough-fare into Eternal Life. Whereas it is just so far out the way.

For die when we will, and be buried where we will, and lie in the Grave as long as we will, we must all return from thence and stand again upon the Earth, before we can ascend into the Heavens.

—*Hinc itur ad Astra.*

Now the Assertion of Christ concerning himself was, *that Man by him may live for ever.*

And this is that Magnetick which hath drawn the World after him.

For as he said to us, *Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God :* So we may say of him ; Except his words exceed the Words of common Men, what should we follow him for ?

And

And thus, when he asked his Disciples if they would leave him? they asked him again, *Whither shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life*; which no one else pretends to.

Now if these words of his are words only, then was he an Impostor, and his Doctrine is false.

But if this Assertion of himself be true, *That Man by him may live for ever*: Then all our Attempts beneath this are mean and cowardly, as *counting our selves unworthy of Eternal Life*.

The Objection made against him when he affirmed it was, *The Custom of the World to the contrary. Abraham is dead, the Prophets are dead, whom makest thou thy self to be?*

And I am not unaware that this Custom of the World to die, hath gained such a prevalency over our Minds, by prepossessing us of the Necessity of Death, that it stands ready to swallow my Argument whole, without digesting it.

For if the Custom of Bondage derived upon Man but for a few Generations, doth so enure him to subjection, that he thinks it *Jure Divino*, and all Attempts against it to be Rebellion:

How much more may I expect that this attempt against Death (which hath had so much a longer possession over Man) will be accounted madness?

But as a learned Man said, *That the Pride of Women comes from the Baseness of Men; and the Courage of Cowards from others more Cowards*: So I may say, *That the Dominion of Death is supported by our fear of it*, by which it hath bullied the World to this day.

And therefore before I fall upon the direct proof of my Argument, I'll offer an answer to the Custom of the World against me. Custom

Custom it self, without a Reason for it, is an Argument only to Fools.

Nor can the Life or Death of one Man be assigned as the Cause of the Life or Death of another, unless the same thing happen to them both.

Abraham is dead, and the Prophets are dead!
What then?

Why! *Abraham* died of Age (as the Folk call it) *he gave up the Ghost, being an old Man and full of Years.*

And the Prophets were many of them knock'd on the head, *Ye have stoned the Prophets.*

Must it therefore follow that either of these Deaths must happen to me, or that because they died of one death, I must die of another?

Suppose my Mother died in Child-bed, must I therefore do so too? Or that my Father was hang'd, must I therefore be drown'd?

Abraham is dead, and the Prophets are dead.
What then?

Why, *Abraham* had a Son of his own begetting at a hundred Years old, upon a Woman of ninety; had an Army of Men born in his own House; Flocks and Herds without number, and a whole Country of his own to feed them in. And the Prophets were Favourites of Heaven, could raise the Dead, and kill the Living. Must therefore any of these Gifts happen to me? Why then, if I must not partake with *Abraham* and the Prophets in their Blessings, why must I partake with them in their Deaths?

Nor did *Abraham* die, because the Prophets died; nor did the Prophets die, because *Abraham* died.

Then if their Deaths had no effect upon one another, *why should they have any effect upon me?*

And as the Life or Death of one Man, is no cause of the Life or Death of another ; so the multitude of Examples don't alter the case.

The Life or Death of all the World except one Man, can be no cause of the Life or Death of that one Man.

Almost this very case once happen'd in the World, when the Flood destroyed all but eight Persons ; and yet this was no Argument that those eight must be drowned too ; nor was the preservation of them any Argument for the preservation of the rest.

We have heard of a hundred thousand Men slain in Battle, and yet this was no Argument for the death of any other Man who was not slain in it.

Wherefore the Custom of the World to die, is no Argument one way or other.

But because I know that Custom it self is admitted as an evidence of Title, upon presumption that this Custom had once a reasonable Commencement, and that this Reason doth continue ; therefore it is incumbent upon me to answer this Custom, by shewing

The Time and Reason of its Commencement : And that this Reason is determined.

Which if I do shew, then the bare Custom of the World to die, ought no longer to be admitted as a Title against Life.

First then, I do admit the Custom or Possession of Death over the World, to be as followeth, *viz.*

That Death did reign from Adam to Moses, by an uninterrupted possession, over all Men, Women, and Children,

Children, created or born (except one Breach made upon it in that Time by Enoch.)

And hath reigned from Moses unto this day by the like uninterrupted possession (except one other Breach made upon it in this Time by Elijah.)

And this is as strong a Possession as can be alledged against me.

To answer this I must shew, That this Custom or Possession of Death had a reasonable Commencement, which was the Original of it.

To avoid this Possession I must shew, that this Reason is determined, and that therefore this Possession ought to be no longer admitted as a Title against Life.

The Religion of the World now is, *That Man is born to die.* But from the beginning it was not so; for Man was made to live: God made not Death, till Man brought it upon himself by his Delinquency.

Adam stood as fair for Life as Death, and fairer too, because he was in the actual possession of Life, as Tenant thereof at the Will of God; and had an opportunity to have made that Title perpetual by the Tree of Life which stood before him, with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

And here 'tis observable how the same act of Man, is made the Condition both of his Life and Death.

Put forth thy hand, and pull, and eat, and die.
Or, Put forth thy hand, and pull, and eat, and live for ever.

So little doth God esteem the Work of Man in order to his own Salvation.

The Lord *Bacon*, descanting upon the Fall of Man, expresses it thus: *That Man made a total de-*

fection from God, presuming to imagine that the Commandments and Prohibitions of God were not the Rules of Good and Evil, but that Good and Evil had their own Principles and Beginnings; and that Man lusted after the knowledge of those imagined Beginnings, to the end to depend no more upon God's Will revealed, but upon himself and his own Light as a God; than which there could not be a Sin more opposite to the whole Law of God.

For 'tis not to be conceived that there was any Physical Virtue in either of these Trees, whereby to cause Life or Death: but God having sanctified them by those two different Names, he was obliged to make good his own Characters of them, by commanding the whole Creation to act in such a manner, as that Man should feel the effects of this Word, according to which of the Trees he first put forth his hand.

And it is yet more strange, that Man having Life and Death set before him at the same time and place, and both to be had upon the same condition, that he should single out his own Death, and leave the Tree of Life untouch'd.

And what is further strange, even after his election of Death, he had an interval of time before his expulsion out of *Paradise*, to have retrieved his Fate by putting forth his hand to the Tree of Life; and that yet he omitted this too.

But by all this it is manifest, that as the Form or Person of Man, in his first Creation, was capable of Eternal Life without dying; so the Fall of Man which happen'd to him after his Creation, hath not disabled his Person from that capacity of Eternal Life.

And

And therefore durst Man, even then, have broken through the Cherubim and flaming Sword ; or could he now any way come at the Tree of Life, he must yet live for ever, notwithstanding his Sin committed in Paradise, and his expulsion out of it.

But this Tree of Life now seems lost to Man ;

And so he remains under the Curse of that other Tree, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die.*

Which Sentence of the Law is the Cause of the death of Man, and was the Commencement of the Custom of Death in the World as the Original of it.

And by the Force of this Law Death hath kept the possession (before admitted) to this day.

For tho this Law was deliver'd to *Adam* before *Eve* was made, and in it there are no exprefs words to bind her, or the Issue begotten between them ; yet it did not only bind him and her, and all their Descendants, but even the whole Creation under them : for tho this Law was deliver'd to *Adam* in his single Person, yet it was so deliver'd to him in his Politick Capacity, as Head of the whole Creation, and the great Trustee for them all.

And thus *Adam* understood it, for he had told it *Eve* (as a thing that concern'd her as well as himself) of which she took notice, and repeated it to the Serpent in the Dialogue between them.

And as *Adam* thus understood it, so God declared it immediately after the Fall.

To the Woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow, &c.

To the Man he said, Cursed be the Ground for thy sake, &c.

And

And

And God having thus explained himself, he immediately commanded Nature to turn upon Man, to execute the Sentence of this Curse upon them.

And under this Command Nature hath acted ever since, which is an Inversion of it from its original Institution.

Nature was formed by a Law superior to it (which is call'd the Law of the Creation) *Let there be Light, and there was Light.*

And being thus made by a Law, God immediately gave it another Law to act by ; by which the Earth watered it self, and brought forth Fruit without the Labour of Man or Beast.

But upon Man's Delinquency, God superseded this Course of Nature, and put it under another Law, whereby the whole Creation stands inverted at this day.

So that all these common Events which now happen in the World, tho they are become natural according to Nature thus inverted, yet from the beginning they were not so.

Death was a strange word to *Adam* ; for tho he did understand it to be a determination of his Being, yet he did not apprehend in what manner his Being should be so determined, nor how he should make his Exit out of the World, having never seen one Example of it.

And this made the Sentence of Death more terrible to them, because they did not know what God was going to pronounce against them.

But God finding the Man and his Wife hid among the Trees of the Garden for fear of him, he hinted to them their Redemption (by the Seed of the Woman) in the close of the Curse against the

the Serpent, before ever he came to denounce their own Sentence against them; which supported them under the Terror of it, and without which they had sunk down dead in the Place.

And thus Christ (as he saith) is the Life of the World, tho they don't know it.

For had it not been for this, God had executed Man in the Fact.

Adam by this very Act of Delinquency, and the Sentence upon it, stood attainted, and became a dead Man in Law, tho he was not executed till about nine hundred Years afterwards; and during that Interval, he begat Sons and Daughters, and perform'd all other Acts of Life.

From which it is observable, that the change of a Man's State (tho it doth at one instant ascertain his Fate one way or other) yet it doth not work so sudden a change in his Person or Affections.

Eve after her eating, and *Adam* before his eating of the forbidden Tree, were in two different States from one another, she in the State of Death, and he in the State of Life; and yet this did not presently change their Affections one to another.

Which put the Case much harder upon him than it was before upon her.

For she by her very Creation, was made so much a part of himself (from his Passion of Love to her) that he could not be happy while she was miserable; and hence perhaps we read of no other Argument she used to him for breach of the Command, than *that she had done it before him*.

The violation of her Happiness did so much affect him by a Sympathy with her, that all his other Enjoyments could do him no good.

And

And therefore since he thought it impossible for her to return into the same State with him, rather than be parted from her, he chose to hazard himself in the same State with her.

The Philosophers say, Man and Woman are one Creature in two pieces.

And as such, God gave them one common Name before he made them, Let us make *Man*, and let *Them* have Dominion, &c.

And this is still retained as a common Name to them both in all Languages.

But their Offence was at last joint and several.

Now the Articles of the Curse denounced against those our common Ancestors for this their Offence is *the Law of Death*, and is the State under which the World stands at this day, and from which we can never be redeem'd but by being discharged from this Law.

The falling of which Curse upon Mankind, as Descendants from those our common Ancestors, is the Foundation of all the Laws of Man in the like case.

For that Parents have power by their own Acts to bind their Issue before they are born, is the Law of all the World, because every Man hath his Heirs in him. And thus *Levi* is said to have been in the Loins of his great Grandfather, and to have paid Tithes in him four Generations before he was born.

And thus all the Descendants of *Esau* and *Jacob* are said to be in their Mother's Womb; while they were there, two Nations struggled in her Womb.

And

And that the Birth of every Man within any Country, doth subject him to the Laws of that Country, is the Law of all Nations.

And without these Concessions there could be no Laws, because else every Man must have a particular Law delivered him for himself: which being a publick Inconvenience, cannot be admitted in the nature of Laws.

And thus this Law of Death fell upon Christ himself, as a Descendant from the same common Ancestors.

Christ had two Descents in his Birth :

One was his natural Descent from the Virgin *Mary*, his real Mother.

The other his legal Descent from *Joseph* his supposed Father.

But in his Genealogy set down by two Evangelists, this legal Descent by *Joseph* is only counted upon, without taking any notice of his Descent by his Mother's side :

Because this Descent by *Joseph* was his legitimate Descent according to that Law, which makes all the Issue of the Woman born during the Coverture, to be the Issue of the Husband ; altho it be notoriously known, that in Fact it were begotten by another.

And this is our Law at this day, altho the Issue be born but one day after the Espousals.

And the Canon Law is much stronger ; for that makes the Issue born of the Woman before Marriage (let them be begotten by whom she will, unless by a former Husband in Wedlock) to be the Issue of the Husband to whom she is afterward married.

And therefore Christ having such a Father-in-Law as this, his Descent must be accounted from his Father-in-Law, and not from his Mother, because all legal Descents are accounted from the Father, and not from the Mother.

When the eleven Tribes were polled in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, they gave account of their Pedegrees after their Families, by the House of their Fathers, without taking any notice of their Descent by their Mothers side. And so did they of the Tribe of *Levi*, who were numbred after them.

Wherefore, I say, the business of the Evangelists being to shew such a Descent in Christ, by which the Curse of the Law might fall upon him in his Birth, they must shew a Descent upon which the Law might operate.

For as this is a Law, all Proceedings thereupon are according to Law

And hence it is observable, that his being born of a Virgin espoused, and not of a single Virgin, was not accidental, but designed: For as it was necessary that he should be born of a pure Virgin, to preserve his Nature from the defilements of the Humanity; so it was necessary that he should be born of a Virgin espoused, to derive upon himself the Curse of the Law by a legal Father.

For which purpose it was necessary that the Birth of Christ should (in the terms of the Evangelist) be on this wise, and no otherwise.

And as this peculiar Genealogy of Christ was not accidental, but designed, the Quality of his Descent was so too.

There are mutual courtesies and civilities used amongst Equals; but he that accepteth Riches or Honour

Honour from another, doth thereby acknowledg him to be his Superior ; *for the lesser is blessed of the greater.*

Wherefore when *Abraham* had rescued the Plunder taking from the *Sodomites*, he permitted the young Men that fought with him, to eat and drink of the Provisions, and his three Confederates that assisted him to take their Portion of the Goods; but for his own part, taking himself to be as good a Man as the then King of *Sodom*, he scorned to accept from him the value of a Shoe-Latcher, *lest it should be said he made Abraham rich.*

So tho Christ in the days of his Flesh behaved himself with all the freedom of Conversation; *The Son of Man came eating and drinking*; and when little *Zacheus* climb'd up a Tree to see him, he frankly invited himself to dine with him :

Yet knowing himself to be the Son of God, he neither could nor would receive any Dignity from Man ; *I receive not Honour from Man.*

And thus knowing his real Descent to be from Above, *I am from Above* ; it was equal to him to be reputed the Son of a King or a Carpenter.

But he rather chose the latter, because being himself a King, *I am a King* ; he would not accept his immediate Descent from another King, lest it should be said that *that made him King.*

David often vaunted of him as his descendant, to come twice fourteen Generations before he was born.

And *Abraham* rejoiced to see his day.

But he was so far from valuing himself upon these great Ancestors, one a King, and the other a King's Fellow, that he rather seem'd to disown

them : *Before Abraham was, I am. If David called me Lord, how am I his Son ?*

He made no other use of his Royal Pedegree, but to convey by them a corrupted Descent from *Adam* ; who standing attainted of Treason against Heaven, Christ himself under this Attainder was baptized in his own Blood to restore the rest of Mankind into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God : For Christ himself, thus falling under the Law, became as guilty of the breach of it as any common Man (notwithstanding his personal Holiness.)

For we are none of us guilty of this Sin in Fact, but only by construction of Law in the Article of our Birth, which falls upon us before we know Good or Evil ; and so it did upon the Humanity of Christ.

And this Law thus falling upon him, was as just a cause of his Death as it is of ours.

Nor can his Death be assigned to any other cause but this.

This Death of Christ was the most unlikely thing that ever happen'd in the World : His Disciples could not believe it till they saw it.

He did not die of Age, being about thirty three at his Death.

He did not die of natural Infirmary, having the power of Health, by which he preserved his own, and restored others.

He did not die in Battel ; *For his Kingdom was not of this World, else would his Servants have fought that he should not have been delivered unto the Jews.*

He

He did not die by any sudden Accident, *the Angels having charge over him, lest he should dash his foot against a stone.*

He did not murder himself, but made all his Efforts to escape, the greatest of which was his asking his Life of God.

Nor was he murdered by others, because there was a Form of Law in doing it.

And yet he was not executed by Law, because there was no Law then in being by which he could be executed for the Crime of which he stood accused.

The time that Christ lived in the World, was after the destruction of the *Jewish* Monarchy, and during the continuance of the *Roman* Conquest; under which the *Jewish* Nation being then Subjects, were permitted the exercise of their Religion and Priesthood, but not of the Civil Power which they had while their Monarchy was in being.

So that if a *Jew* had committed any Offence against the *Jewish* Law, which was not an Offence against the *Roman* Law, he was liable to no other Punishment than the Censure of the *Jewish* Church.

And this was the Case of Christ.

He being of the *Jewish* Nation, was accused of Blasphemy, which was Death by their Law; but being not so by the *Roman* Law, the Priests were at a loss how to get a formal Sentence against him.

And therefore when *Pilate* first demanded of them his Accusation, they gave for Answer, *Were he not a Malefactor, we would not have delivered him unto thee*; expecting to have had him condemned upon their Honour: having indeed brought him

him in such a pickle as would have half hang'd any Man upon the view.

But we know *Pilate's* Reply to that, and to their Accusation, when they offer'd it.

And considering (in the sequel of the History) the Warning sent to *Pilate* by a Message from Heaven, his own Inclinations to obey it, and the former Affections of the People towards him, who had their Election to redeem him against a common Rogue, it seem'd impossible that he should have been executed.

Who can assign the Cause why *Herod* and *Pilate*, *Jews* and *Romans*, Priests and People (who were each at odds with one another in other matters) should all fall in together to condemn innocent Blood?

That the most exact Worshipper of God should be accused for a Blasphemer!

That he that refus'd to be a King, should be arraign'd for a Traitor!

Such was the Death of Christ, without a Precedent, without a Name, without a Reason, without a Cause. *They hated me without a Cause.*

But they were all against him, because God was against him.

And this he told *Pilate*, without which he declared he would not have surrender'd himself, *Wot ye not, that I can even now call to my Heavenly Father, and he shall send me more than twelve Legions of Angels; but how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled?*

His Hands were bound, and his Feet were in the Stocks, that he was not at liberty to defend himself; being fallen under that Law which necessitated him to die.

And

And thus his Death is exclaim'd as equally miraculous with his Birth. He was wonderful in his Death, like *Moses* : *And who can declare his Generation?*

All other Causes of Death are but second Causes, which may or may not happen, and against which a Man may make his defence. But this general Law of Death is a Flail, against which there is no defence; for if one Execution don't reach us, another will; they that remain of the Pestilence shall the Sword devour, and they that escape the Sword shall be consum'd with Famine.

Whatever is the immediate Cause, is but the Executioner to the first Command.

It was *Joab* that set *Uriah* in the Front of the Battel, and the *Ammonites* that slew him; but it was *David* that kill'd him. *Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite, and hast slain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.*

AND having thus shewn how this Law (which was the Commencement of the Possession of Death over the World) did descend and fall upon Christ, and was the Cause of his Death: It is next incumbent upon me to shew,

That this Law is taken away by his Death, and consequently that the long Possession of Death over the World can be no longer a Title against Life.

But when I say this Law is taken away, I don't mean that the words of it are taken away, for they

they remain with us to this day, and being matter of Record must remain for ever :

But that it is satisfied by other matter of Record, by which the force of it is gone,

And I call that Law taken away which is satisfied.

Law satisfied is no Law : as a Debt satisfied is no Debt.

Now the specifick Demand of the Law was Death :

And the Death of a Man.

And the Death of a Man made under the Law.

And therefore Christ, to qualify himself for this Undertaking, became Man in the manner and form beforementioned ; for had he assumed the Human Nature by any other entrance into it, he had not come under the Law, and therefore could not have been put to answer it : *For what the Law says, it says to them that are under it.*

And hence the Genealogy of Christ is a fundamental part of Eternal Life.

For Christ had visited the World once before under the Name of *Melchisedeck* ; but not then making his entrance by a Father or Mother, but assuming the Humanity immediately (like the appearances of Angels) the Law could not reach him for want of a legal Genealogy from *Adam*, by which it might attain him ; and therefore he then returned to Heaven without hurt (as several appearances of Angels in the Forms of Men did afterwards.)

But in his coming in the Flesh pursuant to this Covenant of Eternal Life, *He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of Abraham.*

And

And having thus qualified himself to be a Subject to the Law, he as such did suffer under it by his Death, by which he perform'd the literal Sentence of the Law, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.*

Which yet he might have done, and not have given the Law Satisfaction; for Millions of Men before him had undergone the literal Sentence of the Law by dying under it, and yet the Law was nevertheless dissatisfied with them and others.

But he declar'd, *It is finished*, before he gave up the Ghost.

And this is the difference between his Death and ours: Man dies under the Execution of the Law before he can give Satisfaction to the Justice of it; but this Son of Man gave Satisfaction to the Justice of the Law, before the extremity of the Execution could reach him.

And this he did by the dignity of his Person: For this Law was not such a Civil Contract, that the Breach of it could be satisfied with Money.

But it was a Law of Honour, the Breach whereof required personal Satisfaction for the most impudent Affront, and the highest Act of Ingratitude to God.

Men charge God as a Humorist, for condemning the whole Race of Mankind for so small an Offence as eating a little forbidden Fruit.

But this is their Ignorance of the Laws of Honour and Gratitude; by which the slighter the thing demanded is, the greater the Affront in refusing it.

Had *David* asked the Inheritance of *Nabal's* Estate, he had render'd himself as odious as *Ahab*

did when he demanded *Naboth's Vineyard*. But his Request being only for some ordinary Provision (in common with Sheep-shearers) the refusal of it render'd *Nabal* a Churl not fit to live.

So *Naaman's* Servant said to his Master, *Had the Prophet bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much more when he only saith, Wash and be clean?*

Man by his very Creation enter'd into the Labours of God himself, without one thought of his own, and at the first moment of his Being became Lord of the Universe, which was adapted to his Enjoyments and Pleasures.

And God left him in Possession of it all, upon his Parole of Honour only, that he would acknowledg it to be held of God; and as the Token of this Tenure, that he would only forbear one common Tree (for it seems to be no more till it became otherwise by his eating of it) withal telling him, that if he did eat of it, his Life should go for it. Not that God thought his Life satisfaction, but it was all the Satisfaction God could have of him; it was rather a Resentment of the Affront, than any Satisfaction for it.

By which God shew'd, that if Man had had more than his Life to give, God would have had it of him.

And therefore to signify the height of this Resentment, God raises Man from the Dead to demand further Satisfaction of him.

Death is a commitment to the Prison of the Grave, till the Judgment of the great Day; and then the grand *Habeas Corpus* will issue, *to the Earth and to the Sea*, to give up their Dead; to
remove

remove the Bodies, with the Cause of their Commitment: And as these Causes shall appear, they shall either be released, or else sentenced to the common Goal of Hell, there to remain until Satisfaction.

Such was the Resentment of despised Love; and yet this was a Resentment without Malice.

For as God maintained his Resentment under all his Love, so he maintained his Love under all his Resentment.

For his Love being a Love of Kindness flowing from the Generosity of his own Nature, could not be diminished by any Act of Man.

And yet his Honour being concerned to maintain the Truth of his Word, he could not falsify that to gratify his own Affection.

And thus he bore the Passion of his own Love, till he had found out a Salvo for his Honour by *that Son of Man*, who gave him Satisfaction all at once by the Dignity of his Person.

Personal Satisfaction by the Laws of Honour, are esteemed sufficient or not sufficient, according to the equality or inequality between the Persons who give and take the Affront.

Therefore God, to vindicate his Honour thus affronted, was oblig'd to find out a Person (for that purpose) equal to himself, who was affronted.

The Invention of which, is called *the manifold Wisdom of God*.

The Invention it self being the highest Expression of the deepest Love.

And the Execution of this Invention (in the Death of Christ) being the deepest Resentment of the highest Affront.

Which Death of Christ did nevertheless surmount all the Demands made upon him.

For as much as his Person was superior in Dignity to the Human Nature, so much the Satisfaction by his Death surmounted the Offence of Man.

And thus (I say) this Law being fulfilled and over satisfied by Christ in his Death, was, and is taken away ; so that there was no such Law in being against him, after his Resurrection.

He was made under the Law by his Birth, but he did not arise under it, having taken it away by his Death.

And having thus taken away the Law by his Death, the Life regain'd by him in his Resurrection, was *by Conquest*.

He met with no quarter from God nor Man : God would not save him from Death, tho he ask'd him, and therefore he rescu'd himself from it.

He pray'd to be preserv'd from Death before it came upon him, but he crav'd no Aid against the Power of it towards his Resurrection.

Destroy this Body, and I will raise it in three days.

Die he knew he must ; but rise he knew he could.

And the reason of his Resurrection was, because Death could hold him no longer : *For it was not possible that he should be held any longer of it.*

And this he did, not in contradiction to the Will of God : For God having executed the Law upon him by his Death, he did not oppose him in his Resurrection.

And therefore, tho he could not come down from the Cross, because the Will of God was then
against

against him, yet he could arise from the Dead, because the Will of God did not then oppose him.

And so God leaving him to himself, he conquer'd Death.

By which, according to all the Laws of Conquest, the Law of Death is taken away.

For by the Laws of Conquest, the Laws of the Conquered are *ipso facto* taken away by the very Conquest: and all Records and Writings that remain of them, are of no more force than waste Paper.

The Law of Death (as I have said) remains in Words, and will remain for ever; but it had no more force against Christ, after his Resurrection, than if it had never been made.

And from hence the Title of Christ to Eternal Life, is become absolute.

By absolute, I mean, discharged from all Tenure or Condition, and consequently from all Forfeiture.

And this is the Title of Conquerors, who hold of none but themselves, because they receive their Right from none but their Arms:

And is in opposition to the first Title of Life deliver'd to *Adam*, which was held by Tenure, as being receiv'd from God; and being so held, it became forfeited to him of whom it was held, according to the Laws of Tenure.

But Christ receiving his Life in his Resurrection from none but himself; *I lay down my Life of my self, and I take it up again*; it is now his own without Tenure, and therefore is absolute, and cannot be forfeited.

And

And as his Title to Life is thus become absolute by Conquest :

So the Duration of it is become Eternal, by being annexed to the Person of the Godhead.

A Man may have an absolute Title, and yet that Title may be but for a time.

Life is call'd Temporal or Eternal, according to the Persons or Things to which it is annexed or united.

The Life of Vegetables and Animals is called a Temporal Life, because it is annexed to things which have a Temporal Duration.

And thus, according to our Laws, whatever is annexed to the Person of a Man, is adjudged to have continuance during his Life.

So that if Land be convey'd to a Man indefinitely, without naming any time how long he shall hold it, he has (without more saying) an Estate for Life, because his Estate is annexed to his Person, which is said to have continuance for his Life.

And hence the Life of Christ regained by the Conquest of his Resurrection, being annexed to the Person of his Godhead, which is eternal, doth thereby become Eternal Life ; for *the Life of God* and *Eternal Life* are synonymous Terms.

And thus Christ, ever since his Resurrection, did and doth stand seized of an absolute and indefeazible Estate of Eternal Life, without any Tenure or Condition, or other matter or thing to change or determine it for ever.

AND

AND I had reason thus to assert the Title of Christ at large.

Because this is the Title by and under which I am going to affirm my Argument, and to claim Eternal Life for my self and all the World.

Had Christ thus become Man, and died and rose again, all voluntarily, to try an Experiment, he had only saved his own Life, and left all the World to shift for themselves.

But this would have been Knight-Errantry in tempting God, against which he hath sufficiently declared himself.

And yet when I say he did not do it voluntarily, I don't mean that he did it unwillingly :

For as he did it with all frankness and generosity of his Will, *I lay down my Life of my self*, so he did it with the highest affection of Love to Mankind. *Greater Love than this hath no Man, that he lay down his Life for his Friend.*

But I mean, he did not do it purely voluntarily, without a necessity of doing it ; and a Consideration for it.

First then ; There was a Necessity upon God himself.

God told *Adam*, that *if he did eat, he should die.* The Devil told *Eve*, that *they might eat, and not die.*

And these were the first words spoken to Man by God or the Devil ; upon the Truth or Falshood whereof the very Beings of them both were to depend for ever.

For which ever of them could maintain the
Truth

Truth of his Word against the other, he must have been God, and the other the Devil.

And therefore God having turned the Lye upon the Devil, he is from thence called a Lyar from the beginning, and the Father of it, and will never be believed again for ever.

God could not have dispensed with his Word, without complementing the Devil with his God-head, in taking the Lye upon himself; and this he could not do: *For God cannot lye*, without undei-fying himself; and this he can't do, because all his Qualities being of his Essence, he can't change them.

That God cannot change, is not a deficiency in his Nature, but the Perfection of his Essence, which can be nothing but himself.

For as it is the happiness of imperfect Beings to be capable of change, in order to be made better; so it is the happiness of perfect Beings to be incapable of change, whereby to be made worse.

Man can lye, because he can't speak Truth; there's nothing that a Man can say, but what he can unsay and falsify by the change of his Mind, which he can change only because he can't fix it: as a Man that hath a broken Arm can turn it every way, because he can fix it no way.

Nothing but an absolute Power can be absolute in any thing; therefore Man having no absolute Power, can't absolutely determine his own Will; every change of which, subjects him to a Lye, either by falsifying his former Resolutions, or his present Inclinations.

But God having an absolute Power to determine his own Will, he could not change it after he had
so

so determined it ; for what is fix'd can't be changed.

Wherefore God could not dispense with the Breach of his Law to pardon it.

Which was not for want of Mercy in God, for he hath and doth daily pardon ten thousand times the Sins committed by Man against the moral Law, which seem as great Offences as this.

Because the moral Law hath in it self a Defeazance or Condition annexed to it at the time of the first delivering of it. *Except ye repent, ye shall perish.*

By which this Law may be fulfilled without a performance of it *in specie*, by doing another thing which is admitted to be done instead of it.

A Defeazance is not the same thing with the thing to be defeated, but something collateral to it.

And thus Repentance, which is not a performance of the Moral Law, is nevertheless accepted instead of it.

But in this Law deliver'd to *Adam*, there was no such condition annexed to it at the first delivery.

The words are absolute ; *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die*, which leaves no room for Repentance. *Adam* did repent, but he found no place for it, he could not find any words of the Law to which he could apply his Repentance to do him any good.

And when a Deed hath no defeazance or condition annexed to it at the time of the first delivery, it can't be added to it afterwards.

And hence tho this Law delivered to *Adam*, was at the time of the first delivery a *Law of Life and Death*, yet the Law of Life being ended by breach of the Condition, there was then nothing

left but the Law of Death, which became absolute without any condition.

And this put God upon a necessity of executing the Sentence of the Law upon Man *in specie*, or making himself a Lyar; which he could not do, and therefore the necessity upon him was absolute.

Which Necessity was (all the while) a contradiction to his Nature, which is Love to Man. *God is Love.*

And this divided him against himself, and laid him under a necessity of finding out an Invention, to reconcile his Truth to his Love, and his Love to his Truth.

And this Necessity upon God, drew a Necessity upon Christ to come and execute this Invention, because none could do it but himself.

Now there being such a Necessity for Christ's assuming the Human Nature, and dying under it, there was a Covenant made between him and the Father, previous to his coming in the Flesh, which is called *the Covenant of Eternal Life*, and is the History of the Scriptures, altho it be not set down altogether in any one place.

Rich Metals, and precious Stones, don't lie together in heaps above ground; but being so valuable when found, Men think it worth their while to dig down for them in all places where they have any probability of finding them.

Then if the way and manner of attaining Eternal Life, doth lie in so narrow a Volume as the Bible (*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life*) shall we not think it worth our while to search it through for *that precious Stone with a new Name, which none can read but they that have it?* And

And this is a more pleasant Labour than the search for other Jewels, for there we meet with nothing of pleasure or profit till we find the very thing we seek for. But in making this enquiry, we divert our selves with Knowledge all the way we go.

Nor did God think any one Man, or any one Age of the World, worthy to have the whole of this Covenant revealed to them all at once.

He was 4000 Years from *Adam* to Christ, delivering it in Types and Shadows to 62 Generations of Men, who passed their Age in that time.

But having thus prefaced it at *sundry times*, and in *divers manners* to our Fathers by the Prophets, he at last spoke it to us by his Son.

In which these Parts do appear.

1. *The Date.*
2. *The Parties.*
3. *The Contents and Consideration.*
4. *The Sealing and Execution.*
5. *The Witnesses.*
6. *The Ceremony required of Man, whereby to execute it on his part, and take the advantage of it.*

1. *The Date.* This was before the Foundation of the World. *I was set up from everlasting: Before Abraham was, I am. God who created all things by Jesus Christ: the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.*

The priority of which Date prevents any preincumbrance that could be made of Eterna | Life: which is more than can be said of any Titles amongst Men.

2. *The Parties.* It was between him and the Father. *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God. In the Volume of the Book it is written of me.*

I will give thee the Heathen for thy Possession, and the utmost Parts of the Earth for thine Inheritance.

The first Text tells us what he came to do, and in pursuance of what Agreement. The other, what he was to have for doing it, and who he was to have it from. Now God being the undoubted Author of Eternal Life, there can be no hazard in this Title for want of a right Person to make the Grant; which is more than can be said of any Titles amongst Men.

3. *The Contents and Consideration.* That if he became bound, we should be made free. *He gave his Life a Ransom for many.*

Christ well knew what Man stood bound to under the Law of Death:

And did as well know, that if he himself ever came under that Law, he must thereby become bound to the same:

And that if he should come under the Law, before he made an agreement previous to it, he should be concluded by the Law to suffer under it upon his own account, and thereby be incapacitated to capitulate with God about it.

For the Life of a Man attained (as Christ was the first moment of his Birth) is forfeited to the Law; and therefore after that, he could not have been at liberty to treat with God concerning that Law.

And thereupon he would not become charged with this Law till he had made this Covenant:

That

That we that were before charged with it, might thereby be discharged from it.

By which he was to be neither Surety nor Bail for Man.

For in both these the Principals still remain liable, and the Sureties stand only hazarded with them, and have a Remedy over against them.

Which had been a dishonourable Engagement for the Dignity of so great a Person.

And therefore he offered himself a Ransom or nothing, to be delivered in exchange for the Captives, whereby he alone stood bound.

And as such he was accepted: *I have trodden the Wine-press alone, and none of all the People with me.*

And therefore when he was taken, there was not a Man taken with him. *I am Jesus of Nazareth whom ye seek, let these therefore go their way.*

And this was the highest Honour that God could put upon him, to accept him a Ransom for the whole World.

And yet this was not an Honour above his Merit: for as in Debts by Civil Contract, 'tis not the Multitude but the Solvency of the Debtors that makes the Payment; so in the Laws of Ransom, 'tis not the Number, but the Dignity of the Persons that is valued in the Exchange.

And hence this Son of Man being more worth than ten thousands of the People, his Death was a greater Honour to the Law, than if all the World besides had died under it.

And could Man from hence understand the force of the Covenant of Eternal Life, he might see himself discharged from Death in the very moment the Law fell upon Christ (which was the instant of his Birth)

Because

Because Man was to be *ipso facto* released upon Christ's becoming bound.

And after that, it was no matter to Man whether Christ had ever given Satisfaction to God or not; we might have said to God, *Look thou to that.*

For God by this Covenant having once accepted Christ for a Ransom, Man could never after that have been retaken by any Law of Reprizal, altho the Ransom had escaped. As soon as *the Ram was caught in the Thicket*, the Sacrifice that before lay bound upon the Altar was let loose.

Not that the coming of Christ in the Flesh was the Satisfaction, but God was thereby sure of his Satisfaction.

For as certain as Christ by his Birth became a living Child in fact, so certain did he that moment become a dead Man in Law.

But yet all that I have hitherto said, doth not amount to instate Man into the same Title of Eternal Life, which Christ had after his Resurrection:

Because a mere Ransom doth in it self amount to no more than to restore us to the same Liberty which we had before we were Captive.

And then this Ransom by Christ would only have reinstated Man into that Law of Life conditional, in which *Adam* stood before the Fall.

But God having found out this *Salvo* for his Honour by that Man Christ Jesus, he did at the same time find that this would not only do, but over-do all that Man had misdome.

And that this superabundancy might not run in waste, God did declare that, for this, Man should have Eternal Life, absolute as Christ himself had it.

And

And hence eternal Life is called the *Gift of God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, over and above our Redemption.

So that now by this Covenant of Eternal Life, we are not only ransomed from that Law under which we fell in *Adam*, but are delivered over into a State and Title which we never had before the Fall, *viz.* that absolute and indefeasible Estate of Eternal Life, in which Christ was installed by his Resurrection from the Dead.

And this Redemption from one Law, and Deliverance over into another, are both done at the same instant, without any Interval of Time passing between them.

As in Conveyances amongst Men, the Title vests and deverts from one to another, by one and the same Act.

And hence this Covenant is not called the Covenant of Redemption, but *the Covenant of Eternal Life*, as the most worthy Title.

And therefore he that takes any thing by this Covenant, must take Eternal Life or nothing.

A Believer is never spoken of with a less addition than Eternal Life; *He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting Life.*

And thus it is in Conveyances among Men; whatever is contain'd in the Deed can't be divided, but must pass altogether by the Execution of that Deed, (which as to this now stands next in order.)

4. *The Sealing and Execution*; for let the Contents of a Writing be what it will, it is neither Deed nor Covenant till it is executed.

This Covenant of Eternal Life being thus
formed

formed in Heaven, was afterwards sealed and executed by God himself, according to all the Forms and Ceremonies of Titles among Men.

For God having establish'd Eternal Life by a Law, he hath used all the Ceremonies of Law to make a Title to it.

Every Law prescribes its own Ceremonies by which it is to be executed.

The Ceremony (as I have said) by which the Law of Death is executed upon Man, is his Birth.

The Ceremony by which the Jews received the Law of *Moses*, was Circumcision.

And the Ceremony by which the Covenant of Eternal Life was executed by God, is the Blood of Christ.

And now I am come to that Point that hath puzzled the whole World.

What! *Eat the Flesh, and drink the Blood of a Man, and be saved?*

That his Covenant should be sealed, is agreeable to all other Titles amongst Men.

But that it should be sealed with the Blood of Christ, seems very peculiar.

And yet we shall find even this also to be most futable to the common use of Seals amongst Men.

We cause our Seals to be impressed with the most memorable Ensigns of Honour that can be assigned to our Families, whereby they may be remember'd, every time the Deed is shown.

And amongst these, we esteem those most honourable which are gain'd in the Field with the loss or hazard of our Lives.

Why then! here's the Son of God thrown down from Heaven in the form of a Man, as a
Champion

Champion against Death and Hell, slain in the open field, before the Face of Men and Angels, in the Quarrel and Defence of his Friends.

And after that displaying himself again, with all his Wounds about him: *Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my Hands; and reach hither thy Hand, and thrust it into my side.*

Now first I challenge the Heroes to show such Scars of Honour as these.

And then I defy the Heralds to match it, for a Coat of Arms.

Such a Champion, and such a Cause; such a Combat, and such a Conquest.

And therefore (of all things in Heaven and Earth) God hath chosen out the Blood of Christ to be the Seal of the Covenant of Eternal Life:

That as often as Man sees the Seal of that Covenant, he may remember the fate of that day. *As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me.*

The place of the execution of this Covenant was upon Earth, which Instance hath put me upon many thoughts by the by.

The first Notion of a God is, that he is equal to himself in all his Attributes; and it seemeth Blasphemy in Man of himself to suppose any Inequality in his Maker.

But God having owned something which he values himself upon more than all the rest; Man hath thereby leave so to conceive of him.

Now *he hath magnified his Word above all his Name.* And in that Word he hath bound himself by an Oath to perform this Covenant: *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lye unto David.*

And of all parts of this (as well as other Covenants) the Sealing is the greatest Solemnity.

This Covenant then being sealed by God himself upon this Globe of Ground, I can't but think that Man is to pass through his greatest Change in the same place: But I'll say no more of that till I have done my Argument.

5. *The Witnesses to the Execution.* And these were first accidental, and they were the whole World. *The sound thereof is gone through the whole Earth; for this thing was not done in a Corner.*

Secondly, *The direct Witness*, and that was himself: *For this end was I born, and for this end came I into the World, to bear Witness unto the Truth.*

For as he did not depend upon the Testimony of *John* to tell the World who he was, having a greater Testimony of his own Works; so he doth not depend upon Man to witness this Covenant, having attested it himself, in his own Blood.

And this is after the manner of Kings, *Witness our selves*, because they can't have a greater: And like God himself, who *swears by Himself*, because *he can't swear by a greater.*

6. *The Ceremony by which this Covenant is to be executed by Man.* This Covenant being thus executed by God himself, and attested in the Blood of Christ, stands ready to be executed by Man on his part.

And this is also agreeable to the Forms of Title amongst Men, who can take no benefit of a Deed but by acceptance of it.

We distinguish our Deeds by two Titles.

1st. *An Indenture*, in which all the Parties must be named.

2dly. *A Deed-Roll*, in which the Parties need not be named, but are described by the first Prescription of the Deed : As if the Deed begins, *To all Persons who shall subscribe these Presents*; then every one by his Subscription becomes a Party, to take the benefit of all that is contained in that Deed for the Subscribers.

Now in this Covenant of Eternal Life the Parties are not named, but every Man is so described that he is at liberty to make himself a Party to it.

The words of this Prescription are,

1. Positive. *He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life.*

2. Negative. *Except ye eat the Flesh, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, ye have no Life in you.*

Which Prescription doth not respect his Blood as Blood only, but as that Blood is made the Seal of this Covenant. *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood.*

We don't seal Wax as Wax, but as it is annexed to the Deed, and made the Seal thereof.

For the Sealing the same piece of Wax at large separate from the Deed, signifies nothing.

And hence it is not the Wax that sanctifies the Deed, but the Deed that sanctifies the Wax.

For if Lead or any other malleable Substance be annexed to the Deed, and impressed with the Seals, it is as effectual as if it were Wax.

And hence Christ himself doth own, that it was the Sanction and Mission of God upon him that made him the Redeemer of the World : Say ye of him whom God hath sanctified and sent into the World,

World, that he blasphemeth, because he saith he is the Son of God——For him hath God the Father sealed.

And hence that great Cognomen *Christ* is added to his proper Name of *Jesus*.

And thus the Kings of *Israel* received their Sanction by the Anointing of the Prophets.

The distinction between things **Holy** and **Common**, **Sacred** and **Civil**, is the Appointment of God put upon the one, and not upon the other.

The things used in Ceremonies are in themselves indifferent and insignificant ; but by the Sanction of those Laws by which they are made Ceremonies, they become the most necessary and essential Parts of the Law.

Such were the things used in the Sacrifices of the Mosaical Law, foolish and insignificant in themselves ; but being set in order according to the forms of that Law, they became Sanctions to one another.

The Gold of the Temple, the Wood of the Altar, and the Flesh of Beasts were all common things till they were used according to the Temple-Laws ; and then and there the Temple sanctified the Gold, and the Altar sanctified the Gift.

So 'tis in our Law, a Writing is nothing, and Wax is nothing, and a Seal is nothing, they are but Cyphers in themselves ; but if the Wax be put to the Writing, and the Seal to the Wax, this makes the Writing to be a Deed, and is the form of a Title.

Men in their private Stations may argue with one another *pro & con* as long as they please, without doing good or hurt : but the *Ay* or *No* of one
of

of these Men given in a Court of Legislature, may turn the Fate of a Kingdom.

And the more slight and plain these Ceremonies are by which Titles are executed, the more sure the Title is that is to come from them, because they can neither be mistaken nor forgotten.

We think it an extravagant humour in God to distinguish Men to be saved or damned, only for believing or not believing in Christ.

But may we not think it as extravagant in us to distinguish our selves to have, or not have, a thousand Pounds a year, only for sealing, or not sealing a Deed ?

Should we not call our selves Fools for refusing to put forth our hands to a piece of Parchment, and take it off again, to get an Estate by ?

And yet we think our selves wise in refusing Eternal Life, because we may have it upon such easy Terms.

For tho from the positive words of this Prescription, the sealing and executing this Covenant of Eternal Life by Man (without more saying or doing) gives him as perfect a Title to Eternal Life, as the Sealing of a Deed among Men can make to the Lands contain'd in it :

Yet from the negative words of the Prescription, there can be no Title to this Eternal Life without the compliance with this Ceremony.

For if Man can have any other Title to Eternal Life than according to this Covenant, this Covenant don't give him a Title to it.

No Deed gives Man a Title, that leaves any part of the Title at large out of the Deed.

If

If the Grantor reserves any of the Title to himself, then the Grantee hath no perfect Title.

But God hath excepted nothing out of this Covenant, but his own Personal Life: *For when it is said, that he hath put all things under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who hath put all things under him.*

Wherefore all the other parts of Eternal Life are subject to this way of Life by Jesus Christ.

And hence all other attempts for Heaven are accounted Sin. *He that entereth not in by the Door, but climbeth up some other way, is a Thief and a Robber, and comes for to steal.*

AND having thus opened this Covenant, First, I put it upon the Profession of Divinity to deny one word of the Fact, as I have repeated it.

Next, I challenge the Science of the Law to shew such another Title as this.

And then I defy the Logicians to deny my Argument: Of which this is the Abstract.

That the Law delivered to Adam before the Fall, is the Original Cause of Death in the World.

That this Law is taken away by the Death of Christ.

That therefore the Legal Power of Death is gone.

And I am so far from thinking this Covenant of Eternal Life to be an Allusion to the forms of Title amongst Men, that I rather adore it as the Precedent for them all, from which our imperfect Forms are taken: Believing with that great Apostle, *That the things on Earth are but the Patterns of things in the Heavens, where the Originals are kept.*

BUT

BUT *why then doth Death remain in the World ?*
 Why because Man knows not the way of
 Life ; *The way of Life they have not known.*

Or (as I said at the beginning) that Death main-
 tains its dominion over us by our fear of it :

Having no other right to remain with us, but
 because our Faith is not yet come to us ; *When the*
Son of Man comes, shall he find Faith upon the
Earth ?

Man is a Beast of Burden that knows not his
 own strength, *in the virtue of the Death, and the*
Power of the Resurrection of Christ.

Which Ignorance doth not proceed from want
 of Revelation of the Truth, but from our neglect
 to study, and inaptitude to believe it : *O Fools !*
and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have
spoken.

Unbelief don't go by reason or dint of Argu-
 ment, but is a sort of Melancholy-Madness, by
 which if we once fancy our selves bound, it hath
 the same effect upon us as if we really were so.

It is like the noise of War heard in the Camp
 of the Syrians, which made them fly when no
 one pursued :

Or like that possession of fear which still kept
 the besieged within the Garison, tho the Enemy
 had left the Field.

Death is like Satan, who appears to none but
 them that are afraid of him : *Resist the Devil, and*
he will fly from you.

Or like Tyrants and saucy Pedagogues, whose
 former Cruelties render them terrible to those who
 have

have been under their lash, after they are freed from it.

Because Death had once dominion over us, we think it hath and must have it still.

And this I find within my self, that tho I can't deny one word I have said in Fact or Argument, yet I can't maintain my belief of it, without making it more familiar to my understanding, by turning it up and down in my thoughts, and ruminating upon some proceedings already made upon it in the World.

Some Specimens whereof I'll present to the Reader.

The Motto of the Religion of the World is (as I have said) *Mors janua Vitæ*, Death is the Gate of Life.

Now, I say, if we do by this mean *the Death of Christ*, then we are in the right.

But if by this we mean *our own Death*, then we are in the wrong.

The Death of Christ was necessary for him and us both, because the Covenant of Life could not take effect but by his Death, which in the Covenant had two Capacities.

1st. As it was the consideration upon which the Covenant was made.

2^{dly}. As it was the Ceremony by which it was executed.

But all this being over and done, the Death of Man is wholly useless, and serves to no intent or purpose, in order to Eternal Life, nor ever did.

And could we distinguish between the change of our State, and the change of our Persons and Places; this

this Doctrine would be more plain to us.

By State I always mean Title; so that when I say a Man is in the State of Life, I mean he is by Law intituled to live; and when I say he is in the State of Death, I mean he is by Law appointed to die.

Now a Man may change his State, without change of his Person or Place.

Christ by his Death and Resurrection did pass under an invisible change of his State, by being discharged from that Law of Death to which he stood before subjected by his Birth, and being translated into that Law of Life which he gained by his Resurrection.

Which tho it were only a legal or invisible Translation, he was thereby as safe from Death as he is now, being ascended and sitting at the right Hand of God.

And yet his Person remained here unchanged; *Behold my Hands and my Feet, that it is I my self.* These were Marks of Honour that could not be counterfeit.

And that some did not know him, is said to be from their Unbelief, or that their Eyes were holden that they should not know him.

But tho this change of his State in an instant, did not work so sudden an alteration in his Person, yet it did intitle his Person to a change for the better; which Title he had not before his Death.

Christ was as perfect in his Nature and his Principles before Death as he was afterwards; and y t he could not then make his immediate Passage to Heaven by way of Translation, because he was

fallen under that Law, which did oblige him to the common Fate of Death.

But having once suffered this, and thereby, and by his Resurrection, delivered himself from that Law which had obliged him to it; he then stood perfectly qualified to make his *Exit* by way of Translation. And therefore having done all he had to do upon Earth, he claimed a right of re-entrance into his former Glory without dying any more: *I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do; Now glorify me with that Glory which I had with thee before the World began.*

And thereupon God sent him down one of the Chariots of Heaven to convey him thither, as he had done before to those two Heroes of old (whom I have excepted out of the possession of Death) upon this their Faith in him, before they saw him. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

Now I say this, that as Christ did thus change his State upon Earth, without change of his Person or Place; so Man may do too, with this difference, that tho Christ passed this change by his own Death and Resurrection, yet we can't do it by our own Death and Resurrection, but must do it by passing through the Death and Resurrection of Christ in that legal Form prescrib'd by the Covenant of Eternal Life; because his Death, and not ours, is made the Seal of that Covenant.

And this Man may do, without any real Death or Resurrection of his own.

If the Death and Resurrection of Christ be the Passage into Eternal Life, then he that is passed this, is passed into Eternal Life, whether he himself ever died or not.

And

And for us to think to imitate Christ in attaining Eternal Life by passing through Death, because Christ did so ; shews us to be as ignorant of the Law of Eternal Life, as a Man would seem of our Laws, who seeing another intituled to an Estate by sealing of a piece of Wax upon a piece of Parchment, shou'd think to get the same himself, by doing the same thing upon other pieces of the like, of his own putting together.

For my own part (I thank God) I have already made this so familiar to my self, that could I pass through an actual Death and Resurrection of my own without Pain, I would not value the Experiment as any thing towards Salvation, further than this, that I should thereby know that there is nothing in it.

And of this I am as well satisfied by the Experiments made upon others, as if it were upon my self.

When Christ had open'd the Eyes of the Man born blind, the People were ready to interrogate him to death ; *What ? How ? Where ? When did he cure you ? What did he say to you ? What did he do to you ? What did you see first ? What did you feel first ?* But he knew no more of the matter than they did : Only that, *whereas I was blind, now I see.*

So when the People flockt about *Lazarus*, expecting to hear from him some news of the other World, he could give them no other account of it, than, *whereas I was dead, now I am alive.*

He was neither richer nor wiser by his Resurrection, nor could learn by that how to escape another Death, but died again, and might have thus

died and rose, and rose and died a hundred times, without any change of his State.

Wherefore *Samuel* ask'd *Saul*, *Why dost thou disquiet me to bring me up?* What wouldst thou have with me? Is it to see me? Why here I am, *an old Man in a Mantle*, as thou hast seen me a hundred times. Wouldst thou talk with me? Why thou knowst what I have told thee over and over, *the Lord is departed from thee, and hath rent the Kingdom out of thy hand*; and so I tell you now, and more I cannot say.

If Men will not believe *Moses* and the Prophets while they are living, why should we fancy they shall rather believe them when risen from the Dead? If they say the same things over again, it is Impertinence; and should they contradict themselves, how could we believe them?

We have strange Conceptions of Death and Resurrection as long as we are on this side them: But when we have once passed through, and find ourselves much the same as we were before, we shall be at as much loss about it as we are now.

And if the Death of others who have died before us, have put us into such a fear of Death that we shall die too, I can't conceive how our own Death should discharge us of that Fear after our Resurrection, but that it should rather augment it; for what we have once felt, we are ever after more afraid of feeling again. *The burnt Child dreads the Fire.*

And yet far be it from me to say that Man may not attain to Eternal Life tho he should die; for the Text runs double, *I am the Resurrection and the*

the Life; he that liveth and believeth on me, shall never die, and tho he were dead he shall live.

But this I say, that by this very Text there is a nearer way of entring into Eternal Life than by the way of Death and Resurrection.

Whatever Circumstances a Man is under at the time of his Faith, God is bound upon his Fidelity to make good this Text to him, according to which part of it he builds his Faith upon.

If he be dead, then there's a necessity for a Resurrection.

But if he be alive, there's no occasion for Death or Resurrection either.

Nor doth this Text maintain two Religions, but two Articles of Faith in the same Religion.

But this I do apprehend, that the Article of Faith for a present Life without dying, is a higher Article of Faith than that which expects Death and Resurrection; because I passed through this last Article long before the other (which I am now arguing for) ever enter'd into my thoughts.

I once courted Death, as *Elijah* did under the Juniper-Tree in the Wilderness, when *he requested for himself to die, and said, Now, Lord, take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers.*

Which shews that he was not educated in this Faith of Translation, but attained it afterwards by study.

For no Man can comprehend the heights and depths of the Gospel at his first entrance into it.

And in point of order, *the last Enemy to be destroyed is Death.*

The first Essay of Faith is against Hell, that tho we should die we might not be damned.

And

And the full assurance of this is more than most Men attain to before Death overtakes them, which makes Death a Terror to them.

But they that do attain to this Assurance before they go hence, can sing a Requiem at their Death : *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.*

And if God takes them at their words, they lie down in the Faith of the Resurrection of the Just.

But whenever he pleases to continue them (after this attainment) much longer above ground, that Time seems to them an Interval of perfect Leisure (as *Alexander's* did to him after his Conquest) till at last espying Death it self, they fall upon it as an Enemy that must be conquered one time or other, through Faith in Christ.

And for this cause there seems a respite of Time intended to be allotted to Believers after the first Resurrection, and before the Dissolution of the World, for perfecting that Faith which they began before their Death, and which they could not attain to in the first reach of Life.

For Death being but a discontinuance of Life ; wherever Men leave off at their Death, they must begin at their Resurrection.

The Believers already dead, are not ascended into the Heavens ; for *David is not ascended into the Heavens.*

Nor shall they ascend after their Resurrection, till they have attain'd to this Faith of Translation.

And by that very Faith they shall be then convinced, that if they had had that Faith before, they need not have died.

The

The Story of *Lazarus* makes this plain.

His two Sisters said to Christ, that *if he had been there, their Brother had not died.*

And others that stood by, said, *Could not this Man that opened the Eyes of the blind, have even caused that this Man should not have died?*

And *Martha* said further, *That whatever Christ would yet ask of God, God would give it him:* By which she declared her Faith to be, that Christ could raise her Brother presently.

Now these People had not these Articles of Faith from any Religion then commonly received amongst them:

But observing the Miracles Christ had done before, they could not beat it out of their Heads, but that he could have prevented the Death of *Lazarus*, and could then raise him presently.

Both which were right and rational Conclusions, and did form a true Religion in them.

But when Christ closed in with them upon it, and offered to make it good by raising the dead Man presently, they all fell to recanting their Faith; one cry'd, *He stinketh*, and the other, *He hath been dead four days*; and thereupon desired him to desist.

And the reason of the Recantation is evident.

The common Religion then received amongst them concerning the Resurrection, was (what we still retain) *That there will be a Resurrection at the last day.*

And this having gain'd an Impression upon them from the force of Education, was too strong for that single Impression which fell upon their Minds from their own Observation only.

And

And therefore they thought it safer to renounce their own Faith, than the Religion delivered them by their Parents.

But Christ by doing the thing, did convince them that their own Faith and Opinion of him was right.

And yet he did not say that the Religion delivered them by their Parents was wrong :

For that there will be a Resurrection at the last day, in which all they that are not before that time raised, shall then arise.

But what he said (by this Text) was, that this Resurrection at the last Day doth not prevent a present Resurrection from Death, nor an immediate Translation without Death, to them whose Faith is ready to receive it.

We must all be changed, but we need not all die in order to be changed ; for 'tis not Death that works our Change, but the Death and Resurrection of Christ, which we may pass through without Death.

Paul was of this Religion, that we may be changed without Death, *We shall not all die, but we shall all be chang'd.*

And yet tho he had deliver'd this to be his Faith in general, he did not attain to such a particular knowledg of the way and manner of it, so as to prevent his own Death.

And his Confession tells us the reason of his failure, *That he had not yet attained the Resurrection of the Dead, but was pressing after it.*

But tho he was taken away in this pursuit, he hath not lost his Labour, but is got so much nearer to

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to the Mark, and at his Resurrection will be so far beforehand with them that never studied it.

He had but a late Conversion, and after that was detained in the study of another part of Divinity, *the confirming the New Testament by the Old, and making them answer one another*; in which he seems to have spent himself, and from whence all Students in Divinity after him, have stood upon his Shoulders: For this is a Point previous to the Faith of Translation, and must be learn'd before it, in order to it.

And this his pressing (tho he did not attain) hath much encouraged me to make this Inquiry, being well assured that he would not have thus pursued it, had he not apprehended more in it than the vulgar Opinion is about it.

We don't think our selves fit to deal with one another in Human Affairs till our Age of one and twenty.

But to deal with our Maker thus offended, to counter-plot the Malice of fallen Angels, and to rescue our selves from eternal Ruin, we are generally as well qualify'd for before we can speak plain, as all our Life-time after.

Children can say over their Religion at four or five years old, and their Parents that taught them can do no more at four or five and fifty.

For Religion being preach'd to them as a Mystery, they are forbid to think of understanding it. *Græcum est, non potest legi.*

The common Creed of the Christian Religion may be learn'd in an Hour. And one Day's Philosophy will teach a Man to die.

But to know the Virtue of the Death and Power of
H the

the Resurrection of Christ, is a Science calculated for the Study of Men and Angels for ever.

BUT if Man may be thus chang'd without Death, and that it is of no use to him in order to Eternal Life :

What then is Death? Or,

Whereunto serveth it?

What is it? Why 'tis a misfortune fallen upon Man from the beginning, and from which he hath not yet dared to attempt his recovery.

And it serves as a *Spectrum* to fright us into a little better Life than (perhaps) we should lead without it.

Tho God hath formed this Covenant of Eternal Life against Death, Man still maintains a Covenant with it. *They have made an Agreement with Death and Hell.*

By way of composition, to submit to Death, in hopes, by that obedience, to escape Hell.

And under this Oath of Allegiance we think our selves bound never to rebel against it.

The Study of Philosophy is to teach Men to die, from the Observations of Nature.

The Profession of Divinity, is to inforce this Doctrine from Revelation.

And the Science of the Law, is to settle our civil Affairs pursuant to these Resolutions.

The old Men are making their last Wills and Testaments: And the young are expecting the execution of them by the Death of the Testators.

And thus,

Mortis ad exemplum totus componitur Orbis.

Now

Now what *one* Man dares raise a Faction against the whole World, thus constituted under the Political Government of Death ?

Why but ! if the Truth of Religion be defined by the number of Professors ; then the *Mahometan* is safer than the *Christian*, and the *Romish* than the *Protestant*.

The majority of Votes in Civil Affairs may conclude our Right, but it don't thereby convince our Judgment.

Nor are our Rights thereby concluded further than for that Turn only.

And thus it is in the whole Scheme of Government.

In the Power Elective : The Majority of Electors conclude the Minority for that Turn only.

In the Power Legislative : The Majority of the Legislators make a Law ; but their Successors are not by this precluded from repealing that Law by another Majority.

In the Power Judicial : The Opinion of the Majority makes a Rule in Law, but their Successors may alter those Rules by the like Majority.

Which hath made much difference between Opinions Antient and Modern.

And tho these seem (and indeed are) incertainties in the Law, yet the Policy of Man can't form a better :

Because those Laws or Judgments which are good at the time of the making, may come to be otherwise by things that may happen in Revolution of Time.

And therefore none but God himself (who alone foreknows Times and Seasons) can establish an Eternal Law.

When the vastness of Empire in the *Persian* Monarchy had raised a Pride in their Kings to arrogate to themselves this Power ; it proved but a Fallacy.

And thus when *Hadassah* (the Queen) had prevailed upon *Ahasuerus*, to reverse his Decree for the Massacre of the *Jews* ; the *Scribes* (who were the Lawyers in those days) soon found out an Evasion of the Law to suite the change of the King's Mind.

They let the former Proclamation for the Massacre go as it was :

And issued out another, granting the *Jews* liberty to stand for their Lives with force of Arms.

And thus both these Decrees were executed with the loss of about 75000 Men slain on one side.

And yet (forsooth) these two Proclamations so contrary to one another, and issued within less than three Months one of the other, must bear the sacred Name of *Eternal Laws*, for the Honour of the King that made them.

This I instance, to shew that the Policy of Man can't constitute an Eternal Law.

And from hence (I say) I am not so much concerned for the present Opinion of the World against me, because being but the Opinion of Men, it is subject to a change.

And I know the time when the whole World were of another Opinion.

Adam and *Eve* had no fear of Death till they fell under the Law of Death.

And could their Posterity, who are fallen under this Law with them, apprehend their Deliverance from

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from it into the Law of Life, they would all be converted in a day.

I was under this Law of Death once; and while I lay under it, I felt the Terror of it, till I had delivered my self from it by those Thoughts that must convince them that have them.

And in this thing only I wish (for their sakes) that all Men were as I am.

Nor do I yet think my self obliged in this Argument, to dispute all the rest of the World by Units.

For in Matters of Faith Men aggregate into Churches and Classes, where we may argue with a whole Clan of them at once.

Now for Children and Madmen, and all the Nations that know not God, nor call upon his Name; I am no more capable of discussing this Point with them, than with Creatures wholly deprived of Speech.

But for the whole Christian World, professing their Religion from Revelation, I'll venture to encounter them all at once, and that in their own Creed, which I know they can run over as fast as a Mariner doth the Points of the Compass.

But if after that, we would but catechise our selves a little in it, we shall find, that when we come to the main Point, our Faith will be like the Athenians Worship; *We believe we know not what.*

You believe in God, and in Jesus Christ his Son our Lord; born of the Virgin, suffered under Pontius Pilate; crucified, dead, buried; rose again the third day, ascended into Heaven, sitting at the right Hand of God: and from thence he shall come to judg the living and the dead.

Very

Very well! this is a full Description of the Person in whom you place your Faith.

But what is it that you do, or would believe of him, or in him?

Why, we believe him for our Saviour:

Save you! from what?

Why! from our Sins:

Why, what hurt will Sin do you?

Why, it will kill us.

How do you know?

Why, the Law of God saith so; In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.

Why, but then will not this Saviour save you from this Law, and from this Death?

No, no, he'll save us from Sin.

Why then it seems you have got a Pardon for Horse-stealing, with a *Non-obstante* to be hang'd.

Do but see now, what a Jest you have made of your Faith.

And yet I defy the Order of Priesthood to form a better Creed than this, without admitting the Truth of my Argument:

Or to make sense of their own Faith, without adding mine to it.

It is much easier to make a Creed, than to believe it after it is made.

Nor can any Man really believe any part of the Gospel that doth not believe it all.

For it is a Doctrine so dependant upon it self, that unless we know the whole of it from the beginning to the end, we can't know the Use or Reason of any part of it.

Wherefore (notwithstanding this Inundation of Death in the World, and the Infection of Fear contracted

tracted upon Man from hence) I am not afrighted from reassuming my Assertion at the beginning.

That this long Possession of Death over Man, is a Possession against Right.

That the Length of this Possession is no fore-closure of the Right of Man to Life.

And that he that dares prosecute his Claim with effect, may recover this Right, and avoid that Possession.

And that he that is got through the Death and Resurrection of Christ, hath had Judgment against Death, and Execution of Eternal Life.

Christ in the instant of his Resurrection, stood dissolved from all his former Relations to the World; neither could he die any more, being become a *Child of the Resurrection*.

For tho he did arise with the same Body with which he died, yet that risen Body was not the Son of the Virgin *Mary*, because he had assumed it by a new Power, and in another manner than that by which he was first born.

The Body with which he lay down in the Grave, was of no more use to him in his Resurrection, than so much other common Matter; for he was put to add Life to it by his own Power, which he could have done to any other Matter as well as that.

The present Bodies of Men laid down in the Grave, are of no use to God in the Resurrection.

Therefore he permits them to be dissolved into any other Forms, knowing that he can give the old Forms again to any other Matter, by those Characters of them which remain with him. *God is able, out of these Stones, to raise up Children unto Abraham.* And

And in this he resembles himself to a Potter, who takes no care to preserve his broken Pots for any other use of them; because having the Moulds by him, he can make several Vessels of the same Figure out of one Earth as well as another.

And tho all the Vessels of the same Mould are not the same in Identity of Matter, yet being the same in Form, they are the same to all Uses, Intents, and Purposes.

And hence, tho the Dead shall not arise with the same Identity of Matter with which they died, yet being in the same Form, they will not know themselves from themselves, being the same to all Uses, Intents, and Purposes.

But in this God is so curious an Artist, that he keeps a several Character in Heaven for every Figure of Man on Earth, by which (as the Apostle saith) *every Seed shall receive its own Body.*

Whereas we (like *Fac-simile* Mechanicks) make one Mould serve for a thousand Figures.

But then as God (in the Resurrection) is not bound up to use the same Matter, neither is he obliged to use a different Matter.

Whenever the Body to be raised, doth remain so intire from Corruption that the Form of it is not spoiled, God uses that Form again (as it is) without composing any other Matter.

Thus he did with the Body of Christ, according to that Promise, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in the Grave, nor suffer thy Holy One to see Corruption.*

And thus Christ did with the Bodies he raised in the days of his Flesh.

All which I instance still, to shew the Insignificancy of Death one way or other, in order to
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Eternal Life; and that the Death of Man works no change in him.

TO make this still more plain, consider when and where the Predestination of God is executed upon Man.

Christ said, *Rejoice in this, that your Names are written in the Book of Life.* Which he would not have commanded Man upon Earth, if the knowledg of it (which seems to be the top of Man's Ambition) were not attainable here.

Now this being part of the secret Will of God (as his own *Memorandums* of what he intends to do) it can't be shewn to Man by Inspection.

But when God comes to execute this secret Will, then it becomes part of his revealed Will, which belongs to Man: *Secret things belong to God, but things revealed, to us and to our Children.*

And the time of the Execution of this Decree being the instant of our Faith in Christ; *As many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed:* We may by this be as sure, that our Names were written in the Book of Life, as if we had wrote it with our own Hands.

And that this instant of Faith is the time of the execution of this Decree, appears by what Christ said to the Thief on the Cross; *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

From whence some think themselves oblig'd to believe a separate Existence of the Soul from the Body by Death: For (say they) something of this Man did immediately go into Paradise, and

we see his Body remains here: *Ergo*, his Soul went.

Whereas Christ did not speak this of the Person, but the State of the Man.

Christ and he were both under the same State before they were executed, which *was the Law of Death*.

And that very day they both exchanged this State into the State of Life; Christ by his own Death, and the Man by Faith in him; tho the Person of Christ went one way, and his another.

So from the words of *David*, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in the Grave*; there was a Conception rais'd of the separate Existence of the Soul: For (think we) the Body of *David* is in the Grave; *Ergo*, his Soul is gone to Heaven by it self.

But *Peter* evinced this Doctrine as erroneous, by shewing, that *David* spoke prophetically of the Resurrection of Christ, in which the word *Soul* comprehends *his whole human Life*, which did die and rise together.

And that it is translated *Soul*, is an *Anglicism*, not understood in other Languages, which have no other word for *Soul* but the same which is for *Life*.

As 'tis usual for some peculiar Countries to have an odd Name for a common thing, which is not vulgarly known in any other parts of the same Kingdom.

See how Man's Life came to him at first.

God first formed the Figure of Man's Body in common Earth (from whence Men also form Figures of one another.)

Then

Then to this Figure God added Life, by breathing it into him from himself, whereby this inanimate Body became a living one.

But in this Composition the Spirit is so perfectly mixed with, and diffused through the whole Body, that we can't now say which is *Spirit*, nor which is *Earth*, but the whole is *one intire living Creature*.

As in leavened Dough, we can't say which is the Leven, or which is the Dough.

But God who first infused this Life, can extract it out again, and leave the Body as it was before this Life was thus put into it.

And this Form of Death God chose for Man. *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.*

God unmakes Man just as he made him: He takes him to pieces like a jointed Tool, he draws in his Breath to himself, and leaves the Lump to the Elements of which it was at first composed, which by degrees loses its very Form, and takes its place again in common with other Matter.

And thus the Spirit returns to God that gave it: *for the remainder of the Spirit is with him.*

But in this return, the Spirit of Man maintains no self-existence, having surrender'd it self into the Ocean of Life, from whence it first flow'd.

When Rivers return into the Sea, they are no more Rivers, but lose their Name and Property, being merged in the Ocean of their original Fountain.

And yet God doth retain in his Memory the particular Characters or Ideas of every Instant of Life, which he doth so extract, from whence (in the day

of the restitution of all things) every Body shall have its own Spirit, and every Spirit its own Body.

But to return to my Argument (whence I have a little digressed, to descant upon this Opinion of the self-existence of the Soul.)

If this Man that was crucified with Christ, did immediately become in the same state with him, how comes it that he lies still in the Grave, while Christ is ascended into the Heavens?

To this I say, that tho this Man's first Faith did thus qualify him for a change of State, yet he had not proceeded far enough in this Faith to qualify himself for an immediate Translation of his Person; but this he must expect with the rest of them who have died in the same Faith with him, and who will not now attain that Perfection till after the Resurrection; *for there's no work in the Grave.*

Man is as safe upon his first Faith in Christ, as if he were in Heaven, but he don't know it.

And God will not deliver out Eternal Life to Man faster than he makes him understand it; for the knowledge of Eternal Life is the Essence of it. *This is Eternal Life, to know God and Jesus Christ.*

Every Man possesses as much of Eternal Life as he knows; and he knows as much as he possesseth, and no more.

And what the residue of Eternal Life is beyond our present knowledge, *it hath not enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive*: For no Man can know till he doth know.

And hence the different Gifts of Faith by God bestowed upon Man, are incommunicable to one another.

Abr a-

Abraham was singled out by God as the Father of the Faithful, and yet he never attained the Faith of Translation, which his Progenitor *Enoch* had done before him.

Elisba was an Eye-witness of *Elijah's* Translation, and had a double portion of his Spirit given him, by which he wrought Miracles on others; and yet after all he died the common Death of Man, having not attained to the Faith of his Master in that point.

And thus the Apostles themselves, who raised others from the dead through Faith in Christ, did not yet attain this Faith to prevent themselves from Death.

Whence I say, that God in the distribution of Eternal Life doth not give any part of it to Man, contrary to his own Opinion and Apprehension of it.

And this is sutable to the dealings of Men with one another. If an illiterate Man be to seal a Deed, which he can't read, and another takes upon him to read it to him, and reads it in other words than what are written, the Law will adjudg the Execution of it to be in the sense read, and not in the words written; because he that sealed it did so understand it.

So when the common Preachers of the Christian Religion do administer the Blood of Christ to their Communicants in the Sacrament, as significant only to save them from Hell after Death, but as ineffectual against Death it self: How should the People (who perhaps think themselves obliged to swear *in verba Magistri*) have any higher Conceptions of it?

And

And thus, *like Priests like People.*

As it is delivered them, so they understand it.

And as they understand it, so they receive it.

And as they receive it, so it hath effect upon them. *According to thy Faith be it unto thee.*

Which Faith (I say) is Knowledge, not by Sight, but by evidence of Things not seen, of which we may have stronger Notions than by our Eye-sight.

The Face of a Man gives us but a superficial knowledge of him, but his Works and Writings tell us his Principles and Capacities.

And thus Man knows God by his Word and his Works: Nor doth God offer himself to Man in any way awkward to human understanding.

The reason why I believe that this Doctrine I am asserting is true, is, because God hath said it.

But yet I could not thus assert it by Argument, if I did not conceive it with more self-conviction than I have from any Maxims or Positions in human Science.

Whenever Christ speaks of Life and Resurrection, he means his own; *I am the Resurrection and the Life.*

And if we would thus understand him, this Doctrine would be plain to us whether we would or no.

But our Heads are so full of our own busi-nesses, that we can't think of any Death or Resurrection but that of our own Persons.

And thus we are at cross purposes with him; as Men are with one another, when *one talks of Chalk and another of Cheese.*

Christ

Christ saith, *they that attain that Life, and the Resurrection from the Dead, can die no more, being the Children of the Resurrection.*

Now here we fancy presently, that when the Persons of Men have been once dead and risen again, they can die no more.

But this is false; for *Lazarus* and the others raised by Miracles did not thereby become the Children of the Resurrection, but remain'd still the Children of this World, and as such died again.

But Christ by his Resurrection did thereby become a *Child of the Resurrection*, and did not, nor could then after die any more.

And therefore whoever can attain this Resurrection, can die no more neither.

And this is attainable by knowledge acquired in study, like Attainments in other Sciences.

The perfection of any Science is a Mystery to the first beginners in it; and hence 'tis in vain to speak Wisdom to any but the perfect.

Now the Covenant of Eternal Life is a Law of it self, and a Science of it self, which can never be known by the study of any other Science but it self.

It is a Science out of Man's way, being a *pure Invention of God.*

Man knows no more how to save himself, than he did to create himself.

But to raise Man's ambition to learn this, God graduates him upon his degrees of Knowledge in it, and gives him Badges of Honour as belonging to that Degree, as Men do to one another in other Sciences.

And

And thus *the knowledge of the Virtue of the Death and the Power of the Resurrection of Christ*, makes a Degree in this Science.

Upon the attainment whereof, a Man gains the Title of *a Child of the Resurrection*.

To which Title doth belong this Badg of Honour, *To die no more*, but to make our *Exit* by way of Translation, as Christ himself (who was the first of this Order) did before us.

And this World being the Academy to educate Man for Heaven; none shall ever enter there till they have taken this Degree here.

But when once they have passed this, they can never after be degraded again, to be turned down amongst the Dead (as the fallen Angels were from Heaven) because they hold by the Title of *the Captain of their Salvation*, which is absolute and indefeazable.

TAKE one thought more, which seems plainer than all the rest.

It is said, *We that are alive at his coming, shall be caught up together in the Air with him*; and we are commanded to be always ready for the second coming of Christ.

Then if Death be necessary to qualify us for this second coming of Christ, the next thing we all have to do, is to kill our selves that we may be so far in our way:

Unless we do expect that he should stay for us (when he comes) while we die and rise again, which he hath declared he will not do. *For the least stay for the greater.*

This

This long interval of time between his first and second coming, is allowed for the preaching of the Gospel. *The Gospel must first be preached through the whole World as a Witness to all Nations; and then shall the end be.*

But every Man, as fast as he hears of it, is in the mean time at liberty to embrace it, without staying for them that are to come after him.

The Law and the Prophets were until John; but since the days of John the Baptist, the Kingdom of Heaven is preached, and every Man presseth into it.

We are not confined to the Religion of the old World, nor to expect the success of the latter days by the second coming of Christ, but are at liberty every moment, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as fast as we can bring our Faith up to it.

That he delays his second coming, is not that he hath any more to do in order to Man's Salvation. For as to that, he declared *it finished* before ever he yielded to Death.

But the World is not ready to receive him, and till then the Heavens must contain him.

Whence this is called the day of his Patience.

But this doth not prohibit them that are ready, to come to him where he is. *Come, for all things are now ready.*

He then was, and still is ready for the Resurrection of the Dead. *The hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.*

Where we see, the Emphasis of the Resurrection is not placed in any point of Time, but in the bearing of that Voice, be it when it will.

And 'tis observable that in all the Miracles wrought by him upon the Bodies of the Dead, he used different words of command, according to the different Circumstances which the Persons to be raised were then under.

The Son of the Widow of *Nain*, and the Daughter of *Jairus* (being both dead, and neither buried) when he first came to them, he only said to them, *Arise*. But *Lazarus* being in the Grave, he said to him, *Come forth*.

And he did not only give different words of Command, but prefixed to each Command a particular description of the very Person he call'd for.

He touched the Bier of the Widow's Son, and said, *Young Man arise*.

And took the Ruler's Daughter by the hand, and said, *Maid arise*.

And *Lazarus* he called by his Name :

Which were Injunctions to the rest of the Dead to lie still till he called 'em.

For as he himself observed in two other Instances, *That there were many Widows in the days of the Famine ; but unto none of them was the Prophet sent, save unto the Woman of Sarepta : And many Lepers in the days of Elisha the Prophet, but none of them were cleansed save Naaman the Syrian*.

So many young Men and Maids were dead and buried in those days of the Son of Man, but none of them were raised save those he call'd for.

Nor did these arise together, nor any one of them by virtue of the Word of Command given to the other of them, but every one in his own order (as they were named and called.)

Nor

Nor shall there a Man or Woman arise from the Dead for ever, till *the Son of God* calls them by their Name.

And whoever after that dares stay for his Fellows, shall never be call'd again.

They that were first bidden to the Feast, and refused to come, were not again admitted with them that accepted the Invitation, but stand barr'd for ever by that dreadful Sentence, *They shall never taste of my Supper.*

And yet they did not refuse it by a flat denial, but with the usual Compliment; *That they were other ways engag'd.*

But if he would not admit the Son of a dead Man to go back and bury his Father;

Dare we ask him leave (after he had call'd us to Eternal Life) to go and lie with our dead Fathers, and our dead Mothers, till the Resurrection at the last Day?

Let the Dead bury the Dead :

And the Dead lie with the Dead : And the rest of the Living go lie with them.

I'll follow him that was dead, and is alive, and lives for ever.

Nor can I think who I should stay for.

Will any one, pursuing after Wealth, wait for a Beggar?

Or he that's flying for his Life, keep pace with a Cripple?

Why then should a Man, aspiring after Heaven, stay for Petty-Canons and Vestry-men?

I remember the best-bred Man that ever was in the World, commended *Publicans and Harlots* for

entring into the Kingdom of God before them that thought themselves their Betters.

And therefore he that stands complimenting, with the Door of Eternal Life in his hand, offering the Ceremony to others to go before him, shews himself no Courtier of Heaven.

And tho now I am single, yet I believe that this Translation of Faith without Death, will be general before the general Change (*Paul speaks of*) shall come :

And that then, and not before, shall be the Resurrection of the Just (which is call'd the first Resurrection.)

And after that the Dead so arisen, with the Living then alive, shall have learnt this Faith (which shall qualify them to be caught up together in the Air) then shall the general Resurrection of the Dead be.

After which, Time shall be no more.

But I expect that the beginning of this Faith (like all other parts of the Kingdom of Heaven) will be like a grain of Mustard-seed, spreading it self by degrees till it overshadow the whole Earth.

And since *the things concerning him must have an end*, in order to that they must have a beginning.

But whoever leads the Van, will make the World start :

And must expect, for himself, to walk up and down (like *Cain*) with a Mark in his Forehead, and run the Gauntlet for an *Ishmalite*, having every Man's Hand against him, because his Hand is against every Man :

Than which nothing is more averse to my Temper.

And

And this makes me think of publishing, with as much regret as he that ran away from his Errand when sent to *Niniveh*.

But being just going to cross the Water, I dare not leave this behind me undone, lest a Tempest send me back again to do it.

And to shelter my self a little (tho I know my Speech would betray me) I left the Title-Page Anonymous.

Nor do I think that any thing would now extort my Name from me, but the dread of the Sentence; *He that is ashamed of me, and of my Words, before Men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and his Angels* : For fear of which, I dare not but subscribe my Argument, tho with a trembling Hand.

Having felt two Powers within me all the while I have been about it ; one *bids me write*, and the other bobs my Elbow.

But since I have wrote this (as *Pilate* did his Inscription) without consulting any one thing else about it ; I'll be as absolute in mine as he was in his, *What I have written I have written*.

And after this I'll never write again, but spend the residue of my days in Action (contrary to the regular Profession of Religion.)

And having pursued that Command, *seek first the Kingdom of God* ; I yet expect the performance of that Promise, *To receive in this Life an hundred-fold, and in the World to come Life Everlasting*.

I have a great deal of Business yet in this World, without doing of which Heaven it self would be uneasy to me :

And

And therefore do depend, that I shall not be taken hence in the midst of my days, before I have done all my Heart's desire.

But when that is done, I know no Business I have with the Dead, and therefore do as much depend that I shall not go hence by *returning to the Dust*, which is the Sentence of that Law from which I claim a Discharge: But that I shall *make my Exit by way of Translation*, which I claim as a Dignity belonging to that Degree in the Science of Eternal Life, of which I profess my self a Graduate, according to the true intent and meaning of the Covenant of Eternal Life reveal'd in the Scriptures.

And if after this, I die like other-Men, I declare my self to die of no Religion.

And in this let no one be concern'd for me as a Desperate:

For I am not going to renounce the other parts of our Religion, but to add another Article of Faith to it, without which I can't understand the rest.

And if I lose this additional Article by failing in this Attempt, I have as much Religion left still as they that pity me,

Nor have I in all this spoken presumptuously, or from fancy, having said nothing but what he that made me said before me.

And if it be possible to believe too much in God, I desire to be guilty of that Sin.

I dread no Hell, but the Sentence prepared against them that despise the Gospel.

Behold! ye Despisers, and wonder, and perish.

Behold

Behold what ! Behold Men coming from the East, and from the West, to sit down in the Kingdom of God, and you your selves shut out.

Shut out from what ! To be shut out from *Virtue and Holiness, Justice and Truth*, perhaps would be no uneasiness to us all: but to be shut out from an eternal Draught of an eternal Stream of Love, from the Marriage-Feast of the King's Son, from the view of his Bride adorn'd in her Glory, and from all the Joys of Nuptials for ever ; this will be a Torment created by Man to himself through Unbelief, beyond the Exquisation of Tyrants, or the Execution of Devils.

It seems conceivable that Man by his change into the other World, will not lose any species of his present Affections, or have any new ones added to them: But that all those Passions which are now begun in him, will there increase upon him for ever. *He that is holy, let him be holy still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.*

And then tho Man cannot now conceive by what Objects his Passions or Affections will be thus augmented, yet by his present feeling of them, he may conceive the nature (tho not the perfection) of his future Joys or Torments.

Did you ever feel a fit of Envy ? Multiply that by thousands till you want a Name of Number, and then call that the thousandth thousandth part of one of the Torments of Hell.

Did you ever feel a Pang of Love ? Spend your days in *Algebra*, and carry on the Account of it to Heaven, and there add to that for ever, till your Desire fail, and you'll ne're begin to sum the Total.

All Life is Motion, and therefore cannot be eternal without an eternal Motion.

For whenever it comes to stagnate, the Patient rots, and stinks, and dies.

The most pleasant Enjoyments (being kept long in our hands) pall our Appetites to them.

And hence the smallest addition to what we had before, seems greater Riches to us than all our former Possessions.

And every new Thought that falls into our Studies, proves a greater Diversion to us than all our former Knowledg.

Now in all Inventions of Men towards Perpetuity of Motion, they never attempt any thing beyond a Circle, which moving it self by Rotation, comes to the same place again.

But the Motion calculated for the maintenance of Eternal Life, is made to move in a direct Ascent for ever; in every reach of which, we see, and taste, and feel what we never did before. *The Water that I shall give him, shall be a Spring of living Water, rising up to Everlasting Life.*

But behold! ye *Despisers, and wonder.*

Wonder at what! Wonder to see Paradise lost, with the Tree of Life in the midst of it.

Wonder and curse at *Adam* for an original Fool, who in the length of one day never so much as thought to put forth his Hand, for him and us, and pull, and eat, and live for ever.

Wonder at and damn our selves for Fools of the last Impression, that in the space of seventeen hundred Years never so much as thought to put forth our hands, every one for himself, and seal, and execute

execute the Covenant of Eternal Life, and live for ever.

But behold ! *ye Despisers, and wonder, and perish.*

Perish how ! Why perish under the same Malice against the Son of God for ever. *They blasphemed God, and yet repented not to give him Glory ; being concluded under Unbelief, from the day of Adjournment of Time into Eternity, proclaimed by the last of the seven Heralds of Angels, who setting his right foot upon the Sea, and his left foot upon the Earth, lifted up his hand to Heaven, and swore by him that lives for ever, That Time should be no longer.*

AN D now bear with me a little, while I prepare my self for being shown as a Monster. 'Tis no News for Believers and Unbelievers to be the Admiration of one another :

They wondered at his Works; and he marvelled at their Unbelief. *And, this is a marvellous thing, that ye know not whence he is, who hath open'd the Eyes of one born blind.*

Therefore to be even with the World at once, he that *wonders at my Faith*, I wonder at *his Unbelief*.

And stare at me as long as you will, I am sure that neither my Physiognomy, Sins, nor Misfortunes, can make me look so unlikely to be *translated* as my Redeemer was to be *hang'd*.

And tho perhaps I may be the Sport of some, yet I can't but think (and say again) that whoever is designed for Happiness, will meet with some of that Pleasure in reading which I have had in writing ; and whoever are not so appointed, no one can lament them more than I do.

Nor can I think how any Man that is right in his Religion, can be wrong in his Morals, which are all set to rights in him, as an incident to his Faith.

The Blood of Christ hath an incident Quality, which cleanseth from Sin.

But this Quality is subsequent and accidental to that legal Sanction, and first Appointment of it, *to take away the Law of Death.*

And he that understands this aright, never makes any use of his own personal Virtues as an Argument for his own Salvation, lest God should over-balance against him with his Sins.

Nor doth God ever object a Man's own personal Sins to him in the day of his Faith, because Christ had no Credit given him for his personal Holiness in the Day of his Death.

And therefore till I am more sinful than he was holy, my Sins are no Objection against my Faith.

And because in him is all my Hope, I care not (almost) what I am my self.

This I know from abroad, that *Wisdom is better than Folly :*

Earnest than Jest :

Love than Hatred :

Riches than Poverty :

Health than Sicknes :

A virtuous Woman than a Whore :

And an honest Man than a Knave.

And when now and then I cast my Eyes within me, (I thank God) I find Cruelty, Covetousness and Envy departed from me.

I can't envy a Man of Merit, because *the Labourer is worthy of his Hire.*

And

And as long as I maintain a perfect Friendship with my self, I can be no more a Rival to another plac'd above his Desert, than a beautiful Female is to one of her own Sex, harder favour'd, and finer dress'd.

And as I thus envy no Man, I can't think my self big enough for any one to envy me.

But if they do, I keep an Answer within my Conscience to all the Hatred and Malice of Man against me ; *They hate me without a Cause.*

Besides this, I say no more to any one concerning Religion or Morality either.

And if any one hath ought of either to say to me, whenever they shall please to make that as publick as I have done this, I'll read it.

But what they shall not think worth their writing, I shall not think worth my hearing.

It is observ'd in the Mathematicks, that the Practice doth not always answer the Theory.

And that therefore there is no dependance upon the mere Notions of it, as they lie in the Brain, without putting them together in the Form of a Tool or Instrument, to see how all things fit.

Upon which, whole Sets of Thoughts have been lost, and the Student set at large again.

And this made me distrust my own Thoughts till I had put them together, to see how they would look in the Form of an Argument.

But in doing of this (I thank God) I have found every Joint and Article to come into its own place, and fall in with, and sute one another to a Hair's breadth (beyond my expectation.)

Or else I could not have had the Confidence to produce this as an Engine in Divinity, to convey Man from Earth to Heaven.

And (to give every one their due) this Advantage I have had by *Enoch* and *Elijah*;

That tho neither of them have left the Form of their Faith behind them, yet their doing the thing before me, heartned me on to study out the Invention my self.

And as I never did, nor will, desire any Man to confine himself to my Understanding; so in making this Inquiry, I have set no Bounds to my Thoughts, but the very Word of Revelation, without regarding the Opinion of other Men about it.

Not but that there are flights in other Sciences, that seem as extravagant to vulgar Apprehensions as this doth, and yet they are evincible by Demonstration.

Every Bungler can do Business with bustling and main strength, but the Perfection of Science is to do the hardest Things with the least Labour.

A Mathematician, by a right Position of his Power at a due distance from the Center, will move a weight by the force of one Hand, which five hundred Men heaving at it all together close upon the Center, can't stir.

And according to this Art, it cannot be denied, That the whole weight of this Terrestrial Globe is moveable by the strength of a Hair, and the force of a Man's Breath, only by getting far enough off from the Center before he gives the Puff.

And

And tho this can't be done by Man, for want of a place thus to stand in ;

Yet the Demonstration of it to our Understanding, causes us to adore the Wisdom and Happiness of the Architect of Nature, and Ruler of the World, who *sitting upon the Heavens*, can reign the Earth with a twined Thread.

And this prompts us to believe, that God can do other impossible things, and teach Man to do them too. *He that believes on me, shall do greater Works than these :*

Not by his own Labour, but by putting the Labour-Oar upon God.

Men may dig and carry till their Hearts ake, to remove a Mountain ; but the Engine of Faith draws down the Power of God, which removes it all at once.

I am not making my self Wings to fly to Heaven with, but only making my self ready for that Conveyance which shall be sent me.

In which I don't pretend any Privilege above other Men that are or will be ready with me :

Which (it seems, they say themselves) they are not, nor shall be, till the Resurrection at the last Day.

But remember that *Samuel* came up in his old Mantle ; which makes me think you'll return much as you went,

However, let us part Friends, and every one make the best of his way.

And if I should lose my self in this untrodden Path of Life, I can still find out the beaten Road of Death blindfold.

And

And as I would not allure any Man, Woman, or Child, to venture themselves with me till they see my Success :

So their Company would do me no good ; for every one must attain it by their own Faith.

And if this Faith will do, I have it ; and if it will not do in me, it will not do in them ; for God is no respecter of Persons.

And yet had I a mind to juggle, I would not put the decision upon so blunt a Point.

I can write (and talk too) as soft as other Men. *With submission to better Judgments ; and I leave it to you, Gentlemen. I am but one, and I always distrust my self. I only hint my Thoughts : You'll please to consider, whether you will not think that it may seem to deserve your Consideration.*

This is a taking way of speaking :

But much good may do them that use it ; I don't desire to take it from them, tho 'tis the safest way, because there can be no advantage taken of it to do themselves any hurt ; *Nor any one else any good.*

But as I have more respect for my self than to trouble the World with common Discourses, so I have more Reverence for Mankind, than to hazard the meanest Figure of it with any Novelty, but what I will first pawn my Life to try the Truth or Falshood of it.

And tho I do own, That the very *Daring* of this Essay is too great an Honour for me to be guilty of ; yet I know there is that Gratitude left in Man, that since I am willing to take the Shame of my own Mistake, they will not begrudge me the result of my Success.

If

If therefore (as I have said before) after this,
I go the way of my Fathers; I freely wave that
 haughty Epitaph:

Magnis tamen excidit Ausis.

And instead of that, knock under Table, *That
 Satan hath beguiled me to play the Fool with my
 self.*

In which however he hath shewed his Master-
 piece; for I defy the whole Clan of Hell to form
 another *Lye* so like to *Truth* as this is.

But if I act my *Motto*, and go *the way of an
 Eagle in the Air*, then have I plaid a Trump upon
 Death, and shewed my self a Match for the Devil.

And while I am thus fighting with Death and
 Hell, it looks a little like foul play for Flesh and
 Blood to interpose themselves against me.

But if any one hath spight enough to give me
 a Polt, thinking to falsify my Faith, by taking a-
 way my Life, I only desire them first to qualify
 themselves for my Executioners, by taking this
 short *Test* in their own Consciences.

Whoever thinks that any thing herein contained is
not fair dealing with God and Man (and giving the
Devil himself his due) let him, or her, burn this
 Book, and cast a Stone at him that wrote it.

J. Asgill.

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